



**THE JOURNAL  
OF  
THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY**

Property of  
Graduate Theological Union

OCT 24 1988

**Volume 15, Number 3  
Autumn 1988  
ISSN : 0263 - 0907**



## THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY

THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY is a training monastery and retreat centre following the Soto Zen Buddhist tradition. The Priory is affiliated with Shasta Abbey whose Spiritual Director is Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C. Shasta Abbey is the headquarters of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives of the Soto Zen Church and is located in Mount Shasta, California. The monks of Throssel Hole Priory are members of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives and follow the teaching and example of Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett.

TRUSTEES: Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C.  
Rev. Jisho Perry, M.O.B.C.  
Rev. Daishin Morgan, M.O.B.C.  
Rev. Saido Kennaway, M.O.B.C.

ABBOT: Rev. Daishin Morgan, M.O.B.C.

. . . . .

THE JOURNAL OF THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY is published as a service to all those who are seriously interested in the practice of Buddhism. Through the Journal, members and friends of the Priory are able to share their experience and understanding of Buddhist training. Opinions expressed in each article are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Abbot, the Editor, or Throssel Hole Priory. The Journal is published quarterly and costs £6.00 p.a.

. . . . .

THE JOURNAL OF THE ORDER OF BUDDHIST CONTEMPLATIVES is published quarterly by the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives at its headquarters, Shasta Abbey, P.O. Box 199, Mt. Shasta, California, 96067; telephone (916) 926 4208. Subscription rates are \$18 U.S. surface rate and \$25 U.S. Airmail and should be sent in U.S. dollars to the Editor of the Journal of the O.B.C. at the above address.

# Contents

The Threefold Lotus Scripture	
Rev. Daishin Morgan, M.O.B.C.....	2
Awakening to the Heart of Kanzeon	
Rev. Kinzan Learman, M.O.B.C.....	8
Guest Department News.....	20
The House Blessing Ceremony	
Rev. Jigen Bartley, F.O.B.C.....	22
Activities for Young People at Throssel Hole Priory	
Rev. Myoho Harris, M.O.B.C.....	24
Family Summer Camp	
Peter Lavin, Lay Minister, O.B.C.....	28
Buddhist Training and Children	
John Elliott.....	30
The Monstrous Fish	
Pat Ki.....	34
News.....	37

\* \* \* \* \*

Editor:	Rev. Mokugen Kublicki, M.O.B.C.,
Assistant:	Geoff Hardcastle, Postulant.
Photography:	Rev. Mokugen Kublicki, Rev. Raymond McGowan, Ian Robinson.
Proofing:	Rev. Edmund Cluett, O.B.C.

Throssel Hole Priory  
Carrshield  
HEXHAM  
Northumberland  
NE47 8AL

Phone: Whitfield (04985) 204  
(between 9.30am & 7.30pm)

Volume 15, Number 3, Autumn 1988  
Copyright © 1988, Throssel Hole Priory  
Printed in England



# The Threefold Lotus Scripture

Rev. Daishin Morgan, M.O.B.C.

*[This article and an occasional series of articles to appear in future issues are extracts from edited transcripts of a series of lectures recorded for the benefit of meditation groups. The translation used is The Threefold Lotus Sutra by Bunno Kato and W. E. Soothill et al., published by Weatherhill. Passages are quoted by kind permission of the copyright holders Rissho Kosei-kai. Readers are strongly advised to study this translation and not to rely on these notes alone for a clear insight into this scripture. D.M.]*

The Lotus Scripture opens with a description of the assembly that has gathered to hear Shakyamuni Buddha preach the Dharma. The assembly consists of a vast host of male and female Monks, Bodhisattvas and Gods, as well as the Four Heavenly Kings and the Kings of the Dragons, Kinnaras, Gandharvas, Asuras, Garudas and Devas, together with hundreds of thousands of their followers, and other spiritual beings. They are all gathered at the City of Royal Palaces on Mount Grdhrakuta or Vulture Peak. Such an array of different kinds of beings shows that the Buddha's teaching is accessible to all who wish to hear it. It also shows that there are many more dimensions to existence than the world we see with our ordinary eyes. All these beings pay great respect to Shakyamuni Buddha, even though many of them are great Arahants and Bodhisattvas. It is by making offerings that we are able to hear the Truth.

Shakyamuni Buddha begins by preaching *The Scripture of Innumerable Meanings* and then enters into the contemplation of innumerable meanings - the source for understanding the One Law which is to be revealed in this Scripture. Throughout the Scripture, the term 'Law' is used to indicate the teaching in the sense of Dharma. The "Innumerable Meanings" referred to are the

innumerable meanings arising from true meditation, which is the source of the Buddha's Law or Dharma: true meditation illuminates all activity and stillness so that all things reveal the Truth, which is their real nature. Since things are innumerable so we have the title "Innumerable Meanings." This is important because it shows that all that follows, all the miraculous events and profound teachings, arise from simply being still in meditation, the foundation of true practice.

Whilst sitting still within this contemplation, the Buddha sends forth a ray of golden light from the curl of white hair upon His brow that reveals to the assembly all corners of the universe; the Buddhas that are in each place, their assemblies and their teaching. This golden ray illuminates not only all Buddha Lands and their countless Bodhisattvas, but also all sentient beings, revealing where they have come from and where their present actions will lead them. Maitreya, the Buddha who is to come but who is still a Bodhisattva, describes this vision and explains all the different forms of training that the Bodhisattvas are engaged in. All seek the Buddha-way, some in the depths of the mountains and forests, others in building stupas, some in meditating and developing profound wisdom. Other Bodhisattvas are involved in making offerings of food, magnificent garments, precious buildings, furniture, immaculate gardens and pools, which they offer to the Buddha joyfully and ungrudgingly. Still other Bodhisattvas are shown teaching the Dharma to numberless living beings. All such donations and perseverance lead to Buddhahood and can be practised by monks and laymen but, whether one trains as a monk or a layman, it is necessary to give up everything in order to succeed.

In this great vision all beings are shown seeking for the Buddha-way no matter what state of life they are in. It is significant that it is the Bodhisattva who is to become the future Buddha (Maitreya) who points out that all, however deluded, are seeking for the Truth. For no matter what a being may do, if you



see that being with the eyes of meditation you will see a Buddha, a deluded Buddha perhaps, but still a Buddha. All have the Buddha Nature and all are training as best they know how. Beings act in deluded ways because they do not know what they are doing. When we truly understand the importance of our every action, we will naturally act in accordance with the Buddha-way. That we do not do so now does not mean that we are not searching for the Buddha-way but that we are looking in the wrong places.

The sights revealed to the assembly in this vision are meant literally and at the same time contain an allegory: by entering pure meditation or the station of innumerable meanings, Maitreya, the Buddha Who is to come, is able to see that the Pure Land of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas is not separate from this world; he sees it whilst remaining on Vulture Peak. The Buddha to be within us can perceive all the forms of religious practice and distinguish which one is the right way at this moment. As a result of seeing the Pure Land, Maitreya goes to Manjusri, who is the incarnation of wisdom, in order to understand the meaning. Wisdom arises out of the pure forms of practice when we leave behind our personal opinions and so become able to see the purity of this world, in the sense that this world is the realm of Buddha, an expression of the Eternal.

Manjusri explains that this great vision is revealed by the Buddha as He is about to preach the Law that all the world will find hard to believe. It is only when we know the Buddha Nature within ourselves and all things that we can approach the deeper teachings. As a result of properly done meditation combined with a determination to live by the Precepts, something of the awe-inspiring nature of the Eternal is revealed to the heart of the sincere trainee and faith is given sustenance. We must make the effort to go to Vulture Peak and hear the Buddha preaching with our own heart. The Truth is always freely offered, for the Buddha is preaching even now upon Vulture Peak; but if we are to hear it, we must

value it above anything else and devote ourselves to living it. Such effort is rewarded by the perception of the Buddha within this world, thus strengthening our faith and so allowing us to receive and practise the deeper teachings that are inaccessible to the worldly mind.

Manjusri goes on to explain that there has been a long succession of 20,000 Buddhas in the past, all named Sun Moon Light Tathagata, who have all given forth these signs prior to revealing *The Lotus Scripture*. Shakyamuni Buddha was in the assembly of one of these Buddhas whilst a Bodhisattva named Virtue Treasury and received *The Lotus Scripture* from that Buddha. Thus we see that Shakyamuni Buddha is one of a long line of Buddhas, all of whom have transmitted this Scripture. Thus there is no beginning and no end to the transmission of the Truth. The Buddha did not invent the teaching, for the Truth is eternal. Each Buddha of the past is shown to have taught the Three-Vehicle Way: the ways of the Sravakas, Pratyekabuddhas and Bodhisattvas. The meaning of these three vehicles will be expanded as the Scripture proceeds. It is the fundamental message of the first part of the Scripture that there is a deeper teaching than that expounded in the Four Noble Truths and the twelve steps of Dependent Origination and that the Buddha uses tactful means in order to bring beings to realise this deeper Truth. It should be understood that the Four Noble Truths, etc., are not to be regarded as untrue or superseded; they are embraced within the deeper Truth. This progression to the One Law is illustrated in the brief description of the three vehicles: the Sravakas are described as "Monks who, having dwelt in the mountain forest, have zealously advanced and kept the Precepts as if they were protecting bright jewels." Pratyekabuddhas are shown as entering into deep meditation, "are at rest, motionless in body and mind, seeking the supreme way;" while Bodhisattvas appear, "Knowing the Nirvana nature of the Law, each in his own domain, preaching the Law and seeking the Buddha Way."



It is interesting to note that Maitreya is portrayed in the past kalpa of Sun Moon Light Tathagata as the Bodhisattva Fame Seeker:-

"... always of lazy spirit,  
Greedy attached to fame and gain,  
Tireless in seeking fame and gain,  
Addicted to enjoyment in noble families,  
Casting aside that which he had learned,  
Forgetting everything and dull of apprehension  
Who because of these things  
Was called Fame Seeker.

He also by practising good works  
Was enabled to see numberless buddhas,  
Also to pay homage to buddhas  
And to follow them, walking the Great Way,  
Perfecting the Six Paramitas,  
And now has seen Sakya, the Lion.  
He will afterward become a Buddha  
And will be named Maitreya."

The Buddha to be is not so different from the rest of us! We all begin our training enmeshed in delusion, but we have the Buddha Nature within, the essence of Maitreya, that which will be a Buddha in the future.

"Now the Buddha sends forth a ray  
To help reveal the Truth of Reality.  
Be aware, all of you!  
Fold your hands and with all your mind await!  
The Buddha will pour the rain of the Law  
To satisfy those who seek the Way.  
If those who seek after the three vehicles  
Have any doubts or regrets,  
The Buddha will rid them of them  
So that none whatever shall remain."

I would like to end this section with a word about the use of names in this Scripture. The 20,000 Buddhas before Shakyamuni Buddha were all named Sun Moon Light Tathagata. The last of these had eight sons, all named after some aspect of the will. Sun Moon Light Tathagata is a reference to the two aspects of the Eternal Buddha. There is the absolute, unborn, undying, uncreated, also called the Dharmakaya; this



is represented by the sun. The moon represents that to which the Buddha and all the Ancestors point, the Buddha Nature within ourselves. There really is no distinction between these two and so they come together in the name of this Tathagata. We must find the Buddha Nature within ourselves and then go on to realise the oneness of this Buddha Nature with all existence, which is the Dharmakaya itself. There are times when the Eternal Buddha appears personal, as a presence, the personification of infinite love and wisdom and, at the same time, the Eternal is far greater than any appearance. The Eternal Buddha is always one and undivided and yet is able to appear in any form without losing its absolute nature.

The eight sons of Sun Moon Light Tathagata are all aspects of the will; this Buddha had these sons before leaving home, indicating that these attributes of the will are inherent within us, hence the first son is *Possessing the Will*. The others are named *Excellent Will*, *Infinite Will*, *Precious Will*, *Increasing Will*, *Undoubting Will*, *Echoed Will* and *Law Will*. The will referred to is the will to enlightenment which is the most valuable thing in all the world, often referred to as the jewel or the pearl of great price. It is infinite, for it is one with the Eternal, and it is increasing, there is no limit to the depth or profundity of the Buddha's teaching. The will must be undoubting, for we must not doubt our own Buddha Nature but act on faith, which means to be still within the arising of doubt and know the essence of the doubt itself. To be still with doubt is an act of faith. The seventh son is named *Echoed Will*, for the call of the Eternal is echoed within us; The Buddha Nature responds to the call by rising up to greet the Eternal. We must be still within all greed, hatred and delusion if we are to hear this voice. The eighth son is called *Law Will*, the will of the Dharma, which is the movement of the Teaching or of the turning of the Wheel of the Law. When the Buddha Sun Moon Light Tathagata is no longer seen after having expounded *The Lotus Scripture*, it is the work of these aspects of the will that enable the teaching still to be heard.

# Awakening to the Heart of Kanzeon

Rev. Kinzan Learman, M.O.B.C.

(The following article first appeared in the *Journal of Shasta Abbey*, Volume XVI, Number 4, July/August/September, 1985, and is an edited transcript of a lecture given for the 1985 Summer Lay Training Programme.)

When I was at Throssel Hole Priory, a guest told me a story that might be of use. He had been a miner, and his particular job was to detonate the explosives. Now one time he was alone at the bottom of a shaft, and the cart that hauled the coal out of the mine became loose. For a time he could see it rolling towards him - a full cart - so in a split second decision, he decided to shimmy up the wall, realising that there was no way to avoid the cart completely. And, sure enough, one of his legs was pinned and crushed behind the cart. The rescue operation took, if I remember it correctly, fourteen hours, and during that time he went through a number of emotional responses. The first was fear, then helplessness and despair. At some point during the ordeal, however, a profound peace which he had never experienced before and for which he could not take the credit descended upon him. Before the accident he had been a 'go-for-the-gusto' type of person; afterwards, however, he realised that such a life no longer held the answers for him and, thus, he began to search for his purpose for living, to search - in his own words - for Compassion.

Spiritual experiences - real ones - always have this characteristic of transforming one's character. They are like gateways wherein some aspect of the self is left behind and a new beginning is made. At Tendozan, the first two shrines wherein trainees begin their spiritual journey, or pilgrimage - the Halls of



Taming the Tiger and Luminous Sincerity - are built as gates in order to simulate this aspect of training.(')

In Life After Life, (<sup>2</sup>) a woman who also had a near death experience speaks of this:

When the light appeared, the first thing he said to me was, "What do you have to show me that you've done with your life?", or something to this effect. And that's when the flashbacks started.

. . . Now, I didn't actually see the light as I was going through the flashbacks. He disappeared as soon as he asked me what I had done, and the flashbacks started, and yet I knew that he was there with me the whole time, that he carried me back through the flashbacks, because I felt his presence, and because he made comments here and there. He was trying to show me something in each one of these flashbacks. It's not like he was trying to see what I had done - he knew already - but he was picking out these certain flashbacks of my life and putting them in front of me so that I would have to recall them.

All through this, he kept stressing the importance of love. The places where he showed it best involved my sister; I have always been very close to her. He showed me some instances where I had been selfish to my sister, but then just as many times where I had really shown love to her and had shared with her. He pointed out to me that I should try to do things for other people, to try my best. There wasn't any accusation in any of this, though. When he came across times when I had been selfish, his attitude was only that I had been learning from them, too.

He seemed very interested in things concerning knowledge, too. He kept on pointing

out things that had to do with learning, and he did say that I was going to continue learning, and he said that even when he comes back for me (because by this time he had told me that I was going back) that there will always be a quest for knowledge. He said that it is a continuous process, so I got the feeling that it goes on after death. I think that he was trying to teach me, as we went through those flashbacks.

So this is what to expect from training. It is what you are beckoning to when you begin to train and what you are willingly deciding to do: to face yourself completely within the mirror of meditation and do something about your self-centred attitudes of mind. This is what is sometimes called 'Taming the Tiger.'

Now, of course the blessing of Buddhism is that you don't have to wait until physical death or some awful calamity as described in The Scripture of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva to begin. Through meditation and keeping the Precepts to the very best of your ability you do find, as Dogen describes, that you can cast off body and mind naturally. In Rules for Meditation he says, "I myself have seen that the ability to die whilst sitting and standing, which transcends both peasant and sage, is obtained through the power of Zazen." It is karma, self-will, that produces this mind and body, and it is the training of that will, harmonising it with the Way of the Buddhas and Ancestors, with the Way of the Eternal, that Buddhism teaches. So Buddhism is a preparation for death, but equally, it is a preparation for life.

Now when you begin to train, you become much more aware of your inner life, and you will see that it has a direct relationship to your outer life. In fact, you come to see that your inner life is really much more important than what goes on around you in one sense. It is your response to the circumstances of life that is important, not so much what happens to you in an



external way. Especially at the beginning, it is as if you see yourself through a magnifying glass: you find that feelings seem to run much more deeply, you see aspects of yourself that you had never been aware of before, and you find that the issues of life - the 'opposites' in Dogen's Rules For Meditation: life and death, good and evil, self and other, pleasure and pain - are much more sharply in focus. Later you come to see that the self-awareness of meditation is not so much a magnifying glass, but simply seeing straightforwardly, without thrills, without despair, what is there.

Now there may come a time - I am reasonably certain there will come a time - when you don't seem to get anything out of training. Generally speaking, this hits when the things that propelled you before don't have meaning for you anymore, and the light at the end of the tunnel has not yet appeared. So you are sloggng away day-by-day. This is what is called the Temple of Luminous Sincerity: you just keep going, using your will to do your training to the best of your ability. This is to act on faith. Although it won't seem luminous to you, to those with an eye to see, luminosity is there.

Somewhere along the line, because you are taking the time and making the effort to be still in your daily life and in the choices you make within your daily life, you will come to hear a still, small voice that, every once in a while, will prompt you to do something, or sit still, or something like that. This is the voice of intuition and, if you follow it, it will help you along the way. However, you have to choose to follow it, and frequently you won't want to. First, it will mean that you are going to have to drop something you are doing or some opinion that you have and, since even sincere and well-meaning people are attached to their activities, most people are reluctant to change.

Furthermore, if there is momentum in a particular direction, it can be difficult to redirect yourself

into something else. The third reason why you probably won't want to follow it is that you are going to have to act on faith. You won't have any intellectual or sensory perceptions as guarantees. You will have only the voice saying, "Do this," or "Be very careful," or something similar. Now if you do follow it, chances are you are going to find the voice of intuition so helpful that the inertia to change lessens. You come to know from experience that it is worth following, so you do it. But while resistance to change lessens and lessens, faith and a certain amount of effort will always be required.

A word of caution is in order. You have to examine even this voice of intuition and the activity that you base on it in the light of the Precepts. There is a potential for misinterpreting that voice, so you need to listen very carefully and not jump to any conclusions based on it. You may get some specific thing that you need to do, but then don't jump to conclusions about all sorts of other things because of it. Second, there is the potential for using it to justify wrong behaviour. For example, you may get a sense of something that really needs doing but then walk all over everyone in order to get it done. This is also a mistake.

Other unfamiliar experiences may occur during the course of training, such as having presentiments, hearing the thoughts of others, or seeing visions of beautiful or maybe horrifying realms of existence. All of these may have some specific and timely purpose, and you should try to learn from them. It is important to realise, however, that these things are not unusual, they are not miracles, and none of them, in and of themselves, make you any more 'spiritual' or better than anybody else. They just happen. They are simply possible side effects of training. You should not cling to them, pursue them, or worry if none of them seem to come up for you. The important thing is to meditate regularly and keep the Precepts to the very best of your ability. If they don't come up, it



does not mean that your training is shallow or incorrect.

Now the field of training is your own mind and body and through mindfulness, through paying attention to what you are doing, saying, thinking and wanting, gradually you come to have a much keener understanding of the law of cause and effect, the law of karma: "If I do this, this is the result." This is because the effects manifest not only in the external world but also in your own mind and body. Training, done correctly, resolves turmoil and pain; in the long run, it brings joy, steadiness, and compassion for all living things. These are signs that you are going in the right direction. This does not mean that a trainee operates on the pleasure principle - "Because it makes me feel good it's what I need to do" - not by any means. Sometimes you will be called upon to do things that are extremely trying and exhausting, yet something within you knows that it is the right course. There is a deep-seated peace or conviction that it is good.

So mindfulness of your mind and body is extremely useful. However, it is important to remember that you are not looking for anything in particular but simply recognising what is already there. It is a simple awareness and acceptance of what is most prominent in your mind or in your body at any particular time. It could be thoughts, sensations, or just something you need to get on and do. Probably you will find that things that are painful you tend to push away, which is a mistake, and things that are pleasant you tend to cling to or pursue. This is also a mistake. Just let things rise and fall, and pay particular attention to disturbances that come up. Disturbances, no matter how well meaning one may have been, are always due to some breakage of the Precepts. Something is not quite right. So sit still within the disturbance and be willing to get it into focus clearly. One of my favourite expressions is "Take the bull by the horns": have a good look and be willing to do what needs to be done. Very often such disturbances come up when you

are already at the end of your rope: you don't think you have any more energy or patience. And yet, it is worthwhile to make that extra effort to be still and to face it. You should also remember that these disturbances have at their root ignorance and consequent wrong action. Evil is not an independent, malevolent force. No one is intrinsically 'evil'. All of us have pure intentions. It is simply that there are better and better ways of carrying them out. The point of training is to see them. This is one of the meanings of skillful means: taking care of one's own karma so that one may realise the Unborn, Undying, Unconditioned, Unchanging, and in the process, helping others to do the same.

If you continue to train you will find that the karmic consequences of this life and of past lives do begin to emerge clearly. This is represented at Tendo-zan by the Hall of Shadow Covers. There is nothing mysterious about past life experience. Just as things that happened or the choices that were made during your childhood continue to work upon you later, things that you did or that were done in previous lives can still influence you. Some clues indicating that this kind of karma is arising are, for instance, falling into the same rut over and over again despite your desire to keep a particular Precept. Another is a persistent negativity that keeps coming up: you are frequently depressed or despairing or tired and you do not know why. Inexplicable patterns of behaviour or a reaction that is inappropriate or disproportionate to the circumstances, like getting angry or crying for no reason, are also clues, as are recurrent dreams or chronic physical problems. If you find any of these coming up in a chronic way, it is extremely important not to blame others. The attitude of "Well, because my mother was a bitch to me, I'm a bitch" may help you to forgive yourself, but it won't show the root cause. It is important not to try to change others, but to try to look within: "Why am I as I am? What is my mistake?" That is how to approach it. No matter what anyone does or has done, if you are falling into confusion, despair, anger, sloth or the like, you are



making a spiritual mistake that you can do something about. In the process it may be that others will be affected and change for the better, but don't count on it. Maybe, but the important thing is that you do something about yourself. Fear, depression, doubt, worry, despair, anger, covetousness - these are called 'defilements' (Sanskrit: klesa), and they can be converted. In the pilgrimage of life, or spiritual journey, this aspect of training is represented by the Pond of Deliverance or the Mind-washing fountain wherein you 'wash' the defilements. (3)

It might be helpful at this point to describe the Armies of Mara, as they are called, which visited the Buddha on the night of His enlightenment. They are attitudes of mind, sometimes very subtle ones, which can divert or pull you from the Path. Watch for them in yourself and do not let them get the better of you. The first one is the delusion of self. It is a sense of 'selfness': "I am so-and-so. I am like this." It is 'self' that becomes elated or hurt when gains or losses come your way. The second one is doubt - doubt that there is anything better than this 'dog eat dog' world. Another way to express it is, "All religion is bunk." And it can also be resignation: "Because I have never known anything other than this, I never will." Doubt is karmically produced; it is not something that you need believe and act on. All beings have the Buddha Nature and have the potential for realising it. The fact that you may not consider yourself to be a particularly 'spiritual person' has nothing to do with whether you are able to succeed or not.

Another one, which was especially prevalent in India at the time of the Buddha, is taking refuge in gods of power: "If I make these offerings and supplications, then god will give me a male child or the gods will take care of these problems that I have." In other words, it is trying to mitigate or circumvent the law of karma by asking someone else to do it for you - the 'Saviour syndrome.' We all have our own karma, and no matter how bad it seems, we can

do something about it. Rites and rituals are of no use.

The fourth one is sensual desire. The fifth is hatred - of some aspect of the world or of oneself. This is also part of the Army of Mara. Another one is clinging to life, perhaps to life in the world as most people know it or to immortality in some blissful state. This is not the purpose of Buddhism either.

Another member of the Army of Mara is lust for fame or ambition, either worldly or spiritual. The next one is pride. The ninth is self-righteousness - the unwillingness to listen and to take advice. A Sufi master, Jalaluddin Rumi, once said, "The Veil of Light, which is brought about by self-righteousness, is more dangerous than the Veil of Darkness, produced in the mind by vice." (4) Be very careful. Do not believe that because you know the Eternal you are therefore infallible. This does not follow.

The last is ignorance, ignorance of the real nature of all things. This breeds fear: without faith and right understanding, it is frightening to let go of the things that we know and step off into the Unknown.

It is important to look out for these attitudes of mind and not let them get the better of you. In fact, frequently, the times when you least want to meditate are the best times to do it. Then the koan is right at the surface and more clearly seen and dealt with. Of course I am not saying that, if you really do have an immediate and pressing responsibility at the time of your scheduled meditation period, you should ignore it to meditate formally instead. But look honestly. Is it because you are avoiding something in yourself that you plunk down in front of the TV set, or is it something important that cannot be done at another time?

If you continue to train, in faith, at some time you will awaken to what is described in The Litany of

the Great Compassionate One. (5) "Adoration to the Triple Treasure!" For me, adoration means joyful service out of gratitude. "Adoration to Kanzeon Who is the Great Compassionate One!" There is Something much more than this psycho-physical being which I think of as myself. The Three Treasures lead to It, if you follow them. "Om to the One Who leaps beyond all fear!" It is out of ignorance that we fear; one need only step off into the Unknown.

"Having adored Him, may I enter into the heart of the Noble, Adored Kanzeon!" Another way of expressing this is, "May I be one with Compassion. May I search and cleanse my heart so that I may become as Kanzeon. May I be as Compassion. May I live Compassion." "His life is the completion of meaning." You know your purpose no matter what happens to you, no matter where you find yourself.

"It is pure, it is that which makes all beings victorious and cleanses the path of all existence." Compassion is at the heart of all existence. This is why Shakyamuni Buddha, on the morning of His enlightenment, said, "I am enlightened along with all living things." (6) You know that your experience is true if it has both the 'I' and the 'with.' It is not "I am enlightened; I am the Great Being." It is "Well, It is me and everyone else. We may not know It or seem to show It all of the time because of our karma, but It is, eternally."

"Om, O Thou Seer, World-transcending One!" - the world of greed, hate and delusion. At least for this particular koan you have transcended it. You realise that there is no reason to continue to act on your greed, hate, or delusion. "O hail to the Great Bodhisattva! All, all is defilement, defilement, earth, earth. Do, do the work within my heart. O Great Victor, I hold, hold on! To Indra the Creator I cry! Move, move, my defilement-free One!" What is being described here is the willingness to train and this is another way to know if the enlightenment is true: you see that training and enlightenment are not separate.



They are the same thing. When you train, when you do something about the selfish self, you are acting as an enlightened being. "Move, move, my defilement-free One!" The answer to the koan springs out of your meditation; you cannot think your way into it. You can water the seed by meditating and by keeping the Precepts; you give it the conditions. When you turn around, Something springs up that is not you, yet It is within you and all existence.

"Awakened, awakened, I have awakened! O merciful One, compassionate One, of daring Ones the most joyous, hail! Thou art all successful, hail! ... Thou hast a weapon within Thine hand, hail!" This weapon is the Sword of Buddha's Wisdom. "Thou hast the Wheel within Thine hand, hail!" - the Eight-spoked Wheel of the Dharma, the Noble Eightfold Path. You have found the answer to your particular koan and, through this experience, you know how to continue to keep the life of Buddha flowing. It is a continuous process: training and enlightenment are not separate.

"Thou who hast the lotus, hail!" This is the fruit of training. "Hail to Thee Who art the root of Eternity!" - the Unborn, Undying, Unconditioned, Unchanging. "Hail to Thee Who art all compassion! Adoration to the Triple Treasure! Adoration to Kanzeon! ... Give ear unto this my prayer, hail!"

Thus have you entered the Hall of the Great Hero. You have met the Eternal, face to face. You see the three Buddhas of past, present and future, and you realise that truly "enlightenment ranges from time eternal and is even now." (7) The Buddhas that preceded Shakyamuni Buddha and the Buddhas that are yet to come, all have had and will have to undergo this same journey. It is different for each one; it is also the same.

\* \* \*

## Notes

1. Buddhism is frequently illustrated through the architecture and layout of its monastic buildings and grounds. Dating back to 300 A.D., Tendo-zan (The Temple of the Heavenly Hall located on mount Tendo) has been down the centuries one of the largest and most highly respected Ch'an temples in China. Of its 999 halls and shrines, only four are mentioned in this article.

2. Raymond A. Moody, Jr., Life After Life (New York: Bantam Books, 1975), pp.65-68.

3. The reader should note that the above, short discussion of the law of karma and the defilements is not intended as a guide to "emotional or physical self-help" for people with mental disorders or physical illness (whether diagnosed or not), and it should not be used as such. Rather, it is aimed at briefly clarifying the root cause of suffering and how to approach it within the context of religious training. This does not stand in opposition to seeking psychological or medical help when there is reason to believe that one may need it.

4. As found in Idries Shah, The Sufis, (Garden City, NY: Anchor Books, published by Doubleday, 1971), p.134.

5. The Liturgy of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives for the Laity, by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C., (Shasta Abbey Press: 1987), p.84 and p.116.

6. From the Denkoroku, Chapter 1, by Great Master Keizan, in Zen Is Eternal Life by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C., (Shasta Abbey Press: 1987).

7. From the Kyojukaimon, by Great Master Keizan, in Zen Is Eternal Life by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C., (Shasta Abbey Press: 1987), p.269.

# GUEST DEPARTMENT NEWS

## FORTHCOMING RETREATS AND FESTIVALS:

October 2	<i>Festival Memorial for Bodhidharma</i>
October 24-30	Week-long sesshin: <i>Festival of Feeding the Hungry Ghosts</i> , culminating in -
November 1	Founder's Day
November 27	Lotus Ceremony (Note: <u>not</u> held on first Sunday in December)

This year the Priory will be closed from December 1 - 19, and we will be open again for lay guests on December 20. We warmly invite trainees to come and stay at the Priory at this time and join us in celebrating the *Festival of the Buddha's Enlightenment* on December 25. The New Year Retreat will begin on December 29 and finish with the *Festival Memorial for Great Master Seck Kim Seng* on January 5. During that week, as well as holding the New Year Ceremony, we will also be celebrating the *Festival of the Avatamsaka Scripture*, and the *Festival of Maitraya Bodhisattva*. For more information on any of the retreats and events please contact the Guestmaster.

## OUTSIDE RETREATS AND TALKS

### SOUTHERN TEACHING TOUR (October 14-23)

This year Rev. Master Daishin's visit to our friends in southern England will include the following events:

October 14	Public Talk in London
October 15	Day Retreat in London
October 16	Group-meeting day in Guildford
October 18	Public Talk in Milton Keynes
October 19	Horsham Evening Group Meeting
October 20	Public Talk in Chichester
October 21-23	Weekend Retreat in Shaftsbury

## OTHER RETREATS

October 8	Day Retreat in Nottingham
October 9	Day Retreat in Leeds
October 22	Day Retreat in Lancaster
November 3	Newcastle Public Talk
November 5	Newcastle Day Retreat
November 25	Public Talk in Edinburgh
November 26	Half-day Retreat in Edinburgh



## LAY TRAINEES' NEW STYLE ROBES

We are pleased to announce that we have a new pattern for lay trainee's meditation clothing. It is essentially the same style as the monk's basic robe but, for the lay trainees is made in a light beige, cream or stone colour. If you already have a meditation suit based on our previous style, please feel free to wear it; if you are planning to replace it or are making a meditation robe for the first time, please contact the Priory Bookshop. We are able to supply 60" wide, medium weight, polyester-cotton fabric and sewing instructions.



# The House Blessing Ceremony

Rev. Jigen Bartley, F.O.B.C.

The House Blessing Ceremony is a way through which lay trainees and their families can express and confirm their wish to make their home a place of Buddhist practice and the unfolding of the Dharma.

This joyful ceremony is most often held when a congregation member builds or moves into a house or flat in which they intend to stay long term. In preparation for the ceremony an altar is set up just inside the front door. The residents place a statue or picture of a Buddha or Bodhisattva upon the altar together with flowers, candle, water, stick incense bowl, powdered incense burner and offerings such as fruit or cakes. During the Ceremony a Blood Line certificate is given (identical to the one given at the Keeping of the Ten Precepts Retreat) on which appear the names of all the Buddhas and Ancestors from before the time of Shakyamuni Buddha, on through Shakyamuni Buddha, the Transmission Master of the Celebrant, the Celebrant, and lastly the name of the house. Prior to the ceremony careful consideration is given to choosing the house name by the residents and a ledge or shelf above the main door is prepared on which the certificate is to be permanently placed.

At the time of the ceremony the Celebrant enters the house and offers stick and powdered incense at the altar. Giving homage to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, he or she censes the Blood Line Certificate in the incense smoke, offers it and then secures it in place above the main door. Carrying an incense burner the Celebrant then leads those present in a procession through all the rooms of the house allowing the incense smoke, which is as the perfume of the Dharma, to permeate into all corners, cupboards and drawers. Returning to the altar, all recite the Scripture of Great Wisdom. The merit of this recitation is offered

for the peace and safety of the family and house. All recite the Three Homages and make three bows of gratitude.

Making the home a place of meditation and training within the Precepts is a process which takes much patience and trust. However, by always taking refuge in the Three Treasures, and asking for the help of the Buddhas and Ancestors as we go about our daily practice, the Life of the Buddhas continues to flow. This Life can be seen and known in the everyday activities of the family.

By placing one's home within the Blood Line of the Buddhas and Ancestors the trainee joins the greater Buddhist family: The unbroken red line of the Blood of the Buddhas (The Precepts) on the certificate shows many twists and turns, yet always returns to the Eternal and always moves on. The movement of the life of the family may also take many twists and turns, yet when one chooses to train and situations are approached from the place of meditation, they become an unbroken movement ceaselessly turning to the Eternal. During the ceremony incense is offered and the smoke allowed to permeate all nooks and crannies of the house. By this we are reminded to offer our life and heart to the Eternal and to allow the Dharma to permeate the whole of our being. Thus we nourish the seed of Buddhahood within and enable the fruits of faith and training to flourish.

It is significant that we recite the Scripture of Great Wisdom together for, if we do our best at all times to live from the heart of meditation spoken of in the scripture, we shall know the true peace and safety wished for in the offertory. The home will then be truly blessed, for it will be a place in which its residents can grow the lotus blossom of enlightenment and will always be "going on, always becoming Buddha, Hail! Hail! Hail!"

\* \* \*



# Activities for Young People at Throssel Hole Priory

Rev. Myoho Harris, M.O.B.C.

On the first Sunday of every month we celebrate a Festival of one of the great Bodhisattvas of Buddhism or express our gratitude for the Buddhist Way by taking part in the Lotus Ceremony. These occasions are open to all and we have a mixed gathering of old friends and newcomers. The Ceremony usually takes place at 11.15 am after which there is tea and a talk for the adults. It is during this lecture that activities for the children take place.

Each session lasts for about one hour and is open to those young people between the ages of five and fifteen who wish to come. Children who are younger than five are equally welcome in the monastery on these days but remain with their parents. We begin with a short walk down the valley, (warm coats and sturdy shoes being appreciated), during which we hear each other's news and get to know new guests.

This is followed by the Kstigarbha Ceremony (pronounced Kiss-tea-gar-ba), which takes place in the Kstigarbha shrine. He is the Bodhisattva who in particular watches over and protects children. The shrine is the place where young people learn how to offer incense and take part in ceremonial activities. For this they have a great appreciation and take pride in moving in a dignified and correct manner. It is good to see how relaxed and at ease they are on these occasions, for the last place in the world that a person should feel fear is when standing before the altar.

We walk in procession to the shrine with one child leading us ringing a signal gong (inkin). Once there we each offer a stick of incense. We each then raise our left foot, saying "Homage to the Buddha" and blow

three times on the sole of that foot. This is repeated with the right foot after saying "Homage to the Dharma." Giving "Homage to the Sangha" we blow on the bristles of a small broom after which one of the group leads us in recitation of the short verse:

*"Oh Lord Buddha, we pray that all that may perish throughout the day as a result of our breathing, walking, sitting and lying down may be reborn to a higher life so that all may reach Nirvana."*



The floor is then gently swept to remove any insects which may otherwise be trodden underfoot. After the sweeping all offer powdered incense before going to the common room for refreshments and an informal talk. If the ages of those present are incompatible then we divide into two groups.

Young people who attend these Festival Ceremonies may also bring stones, which are placed before the Kstigarbha altar as an offering for other children who may be ill or suffering. When accepted by Kstigarbha

these stones become as nyoï jewels of enlightenment given to the suffering children so that they may be always protected by the Jewel of the Truth and the bright eyes of compassion. When those who suffer realise this and 'look up' they see Kstigarbha, who is also the Bodhisattva of travellers, waiting with open arms to lead them out of the darkness. By making these offerings young people learn how to transfer merit and learn that great goodness can result from a simple act of giving.

It has always been our aim not to make these occasions feel like a school class or to be too eager to formally 'teach Buddhism.' Young people are no different from adults in that they learn more from what they see, feel and experience than from words. We wish them to know that we live the Buddhist life because it is our pleasure to do so and that the faith and certainty we have found is not dependent on persuading others to think as we do. The children who come know that they are welcome and respected members of our Sangha. We enjoy each other's company and from this has come a relaxed and healthy atmosphere.

Over the twelve months that we have been meeting, our discussions have included such topics as: the life of the Buddha; the relationship between meditation, the Precepts and life at school; rosaries and a Buddhist's view of animals. Now that their interest is growing the children have begun to ask questions in greater depth and so we can begin to cover all the basic Buddhist doctrines in more detail. Whenever they lose interest the subject is changed; in this way they value and carefully consider what they hear because they themselves have asked to hear it.

If a child has been brought up as a Buddhist and that interest continues and grows then they may, if they wish, attend the Keeping of the Ten Precepts Retreat (Jukai). Buddhism waits until at least their sixteenth year so that they are mature enough to decide for themselves that they wish to become Buddhists and are capable of understanding what this





means. In the East they wear the Bodhisattva crown of a 'Royal child' (young Buddha) throughout the Retreat. During the final Ceremony of Recognition the crown is left upon the altar. Afterwards it is taken to the Founder's Shrine where it is placed as an offering of the childhood that has been left behind. When the young person descends the altar they step, in a beautiful and magnificent way, into adulthood.

For further information about activities for young people at the Priory please contact the Guestmaster.

\* \* \*

# SUMMER FAMILY CAMP

Peter Lavin, Lay Minister, O.B.C.

The peace of the Priory was briefly interrupted at the end of July for the first Family Summer Camp. No one braved the weather under canvas but 11 adults, 15 children and a dog moved into the Expedition Centre in Carrshield for the weekend and joined the Priory community for two very relaxing days. Another family with very small children had exchanged a house in Hexham for the week and some of us from far away had made it part of a longer holiday so that it would not be spoilt by the travelling. Others without children stayed at the Priory.

On the Saturday morning the children were busy making splendid dragon masks with the monks while the adults relaxed with each other and the community. In the afternoon Rev. Master Daishin talked about the Kstigarbha Ceremony which was to be held for the first time on the Sunday. Kstigarbha is the Bodhisattva who has vowed to help all those suffering in the six worlds by teaching the true refuge of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and the existence of the law of karma.

In the Kstigarbha Ceremony five children acted as Chaplain and Assistant Chaplains and led the procession with incense, asperge and lotus petals. Afterwards the children had their own ceremony at the Kstigarbha shrine that they had prepared.

In the afternoon monks and laypeople went walking in the neighbourhood or kite flying on the hill, and later watched 'Monkey' videos in the common room. These videos are a popular and loose account of episodes from the Buddhist folktale. After tea a bonfire was lit and everyone enjoyed the summer evening, racking their brains for suitable camp-fire songs.

The whole weekend was thoroughly appreciated by all who took part and it was a unique opportunity to relax with the monks and other members of the congregation. We are indebted to Rev. Master Daishin and the whole community for making us so welcome and feeding us throughout the weekend. We are also very grateful to Rev. Myoho who worked so hard to make the children's visit so enjoyable. Our thanks, too, go to Karen and Dave Richards who suggested it and put in the hard work to make it possible.

We hope that Rev. Master Daishin will allow us to repeat the camp next year and that more families, and those without children, will see it as a most worthwhile opportunity to strengthen bonds within the Sangha.



*....The children as young 'Dragons'*



# Buddhist Training and Children

John Elliott

To care for small children is an enormous responsibility and it is one which can cause intense feelings. How then does a Buddhist view these responsibilities and is it possible or even desirable to raise our children as Buddhists? I can only begin to answer these questions from my own experience of having two small children, now aged 10 months and 4 years.

Great Master Dogen has said, "When we wish to teach and enlighten all things by ourselves we are deluded; when all things teach and enlighten us, we are enlightened." (1) This statement has been a key for me; a key to greater understanding of my children and of my attitude towards them. It is important to see our children as they are, instead of seeing them as our children to be moulded as we wish. Because of our own distorted desires, it is all too easy to manipulate children into an image of how we would like them to be.

Our children are not our possessions. They are entrusted to us for a short time only and will ultimately make their own way in the world. Some characteristics are inherited directly from us; hair colour and height, for example, and some are learned from us such as diet and language. However it is important to remember that our children have their own karmic inheritance which has little to do with us. Karmic consequences will emerge in their lives when the appropriate conditions ripen.

What can we learn from our children? Raising a child will present the parent with numerous opportunities for returning to the stillness of meditation or for being pulled this way and that. At the beginning there are sleepless nights, concerns

over baby's health, feeding problems and so on. Later on there are matters concerning the child's discipline, friendships, and our own choices concerning balancing our work and home life. On these occasions the feelings which arise, such as anger, fear or doubt can be intense. To take these occurrences as opportunities for meditation is the Buddhist Way. To return to the stillness of meditation can help us to view situations from the point of view of wisdom and compassion, rather than from our own selfish desires, anger and doubt. From this position we can safely act.

There is another way in which we can learn from our children. A child will often present us with questions or statements which can 'throw' us. A child's naivety can cut through our assumptions and habits and lead us to see things more clearly. This is not to adopt a romantic view of childhood but is merely to remind us of the importance of First Mind (2) for, after all, our children as well as all other beings are Buddha.

What can our children learn from us? If our responses to our children come from meditation then they will have an opportunity to see the Buddhist Way. It is often difficult to know what is in our children's best interests. Sometimes it is impossible to see any specific beneficial effect arising from our actions and often we need to let go of the notion of results. If our actions stem from the desire to be one with the Eternal, then this is enough. Having faith that training is good in itself is enough, and it is this faith that has helped me to see through the clouds of doubt and fear.

Children are learning from us all the time. They learn from our behaviour towards them and others, and this is true even when we imagine that they are not listening! If we constantly try to live our lives from our innate Compassion, Love and Wisdom, then our children will receive their most important guidance.

Because we are fallible human beings, they will also have the chance to learn how others learn to deal with their own mistakes. How we speak to the woman at the Tesco checkout; how we sort out a disagreement with our neighbour and how we solve family disputes can all be useful examples for our children. How diligent we are in tidying our house and how we care for our potted plants on the window sill again hold out an example of training.

So ordinary daily life provides countless opportunities to teach our children and also to learn from them. Giving and receiving are not different when seen from the point of view of the Turning of the Wheel of the Law. When we act with selfless compassion, love and wisdom, we are united with our True Nature. Returning to the stillness will show us what it is that we need to do when we are confronted by apparent obstacles. Frequently our children can show us what it is that needs to be attended to in our training and in turn we will be presented with opportunities to guide our children through our living the Buddhist Precepts. This cycle has no beginning and no end, for it is the ceaseless working of the Eternal in our lives and will lead us deeper into meditation if we would but listen.

Throughout my children's lives I have from time to time been assailed by doubts concerning my adequacy as a parent: "Am I good enough?" or "Am I doing the right thing for my children?" being typical questions. This sense of inadequacy is not helped by the mass media where families can be seen sitting around the dinner table in apparent harmony. Reality is frequently not like this and the ceaseless barrage of images of seemingly perfect parenthood are more likely to inspire guilt than anything else.

I am reminded of a recent Journal article, the title of which is a direct answer to the above; that is, "It Is Enough To Be Who You Are." No one and no thing is separate from the Buddha and we must see with the eyes of a Buddha. It is a mistake to strive for a



worldly version of perfection which inevitably turns out to be illusory. Such striving can result in grief and a strong sense of inadequacy.

There are endless varieties of human experience and endless expressions of the work of the Eternal. For most of us, mistakes in child raising are inevitable. There is no need to feel inadequate about this; it is enough to meditate and to want wholeheartedly to do better next time. By having faith in the Buddha Nature of ourselves, our children and all beings, we can be truly 'Good Enough.'

\* \* \*

#### Notes

1. From the 'Genjo-Koan' Chapter of the Shobogenzo, by Great Master Dogen, in Zen Is Eternal Life, by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C., (Shasta Abbey Press: 1987), p. 172.

2. See Glossary in Zen Is Eternal Life, by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C., (Shasta Abbey Press: 1987), p. 285. ( FIRST MIND. The mind of the sincere beginner; open, naive, determined and willing to bow.)

# The Monstrous Fish

Pat Ki

I stormed out of my marriage. I was unable to see clearly through the gathered clouds of hatred and delusion. This article shows how those clouds were gradually dispersed and how I was given valuable teaching in a dream.

It happened about three years later; dabbling in therapies and a recent commitment to meditation had cured my anger, so I thought. Then one evening a son tentatively suggested a meal out for three; my ex-husband, himself and I. Somewhere inside me a volcano erupted. I shouted, "No! There's no way I'm ready to sit near HIM!"

That night I had a strange and vivid dream. Standing in a green-blue, choppy sea, cooling myself, I noticed a great fish swimming towards me. It was grey and white. I did not feel afraid because I knew it was a coelacanth, a kind of extinct fish. Since it no longer existed I felt sure it could not harm me. It came on relentlessly. Opening huge jaws it revealed foul, jagged teeth and, even as I watched, sank those teeth into my right leg. Frantically I beat my fists at its head, creating a froth in the sea with my efforts. At last it released its grip and slunk away. I staggered up the beach for help, a great wound in my calf oozing a thick, yellow poison. I knew I had to get it cleaned before the poison spread.

In that dream an ambulance arrived and conveyed me to hospital where kind nurses bathed and dressed the wound. This treatment had to be repeated daily until my leg was completely healed.

The powerful impressions of that dream lingered long after I awoke and I knew exactly what it meant. That monstrous fish represented my supposedly 'extinct' feelings about my marriage; more specifically about my partner. The suggestion from my son had awoken a leviathan which, even though I did not believe in it, had the power to hurt me, maybe to kill off my inner being. The only cure for its bite lay in daily zazen and living by the Precepts.....the cleansing. I had to acknowledge that monster and the wound, and do something about them both. I took the 'treatment'!

In the years following that dream I often glimpsed my ex-partner and was surprised at the genuinely friendly feelings growing towards him. Where was the hatred and the bitterness? But, I told myself, although my anger was dying, he would still be nursing his because he did not follow a 'spiritual practice'. (How pride grows when the opposites arise!) As if in answer, on my birthday this year, I received a pleasant shock - a birthday card from him - bearing the following hand written message, "The water under the bridge has cleared."

So it was clear on both sides of the bridge. After all, everyone is following a spiritual practice, whether they call it that or not.

Since the card we have met and talked for the first time in nine years. We have made joint visits to our sons and it has been fine. We are old friends who once shared the raising of a family and who still have a lot in common. All the violent emotions, positive or negative, have evaporated leaving something calmer, quieter.

That chance suggestion for dinner , that dream, my 'everyday zazen' have combined to teach me that everyone is doing their training; that Kanzeon will



and does work through every open heart. I hold these words very dear:

*"If, drifting in the vast great ocean's foam,  
A 'man' should be in danger of his life  
From monstrous fish or evil beings, let  
'Him' only think on Kanzeon's great power  
At once the sea will all compassion be." (1)*

Thank you, kind Kanzeon.

\* \* \*

#### Note

1. From the Scripture of Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, in The Liturgy of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives for the Laity, by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, M.O.B.C., (Shasta Abbey Press: 1987), p. 46.



# NEWS

**Monastic Events:** The monastic community recently completed their first fully traditional 100 day training term. It is customary in monasteries of the Serene Reflection Meditation School to have two especially intensive training terms a year; one in Spring and one in Autumn. This is a time when monks focus all their energy in meditation both within the meditation hall and in daily life. It is good to be able to train together and we are deeply grateful for the bright and dry facilities of the new meditation hall.

In August Toby Thompson joined the Priory community as a postulant. We welcome Toby and wish him every success in his training.

**Festival Ceremonies and Memorials:** Lotus Ceremonies were held on July 3 and August 5, and over 40 guests joined us in celebrating the Festival Memorial for Great Master Dogen on September 4.

Great Master Dogen is one of the most influential ancestors in our lineage and was responsible for bringing Soto Zen from China to Japan. Because of his profound spiritual longing he was able to penetrate deeply into the Buddha's Truth. His inestimable legacy is the example of his life and teaching, and the rich store-house of his written works. His words are as relevant to us today as they were to his disciples and followers over 700 years ago:

*"Time flies quicker than an arrow and life passes with greater transience than dew. However skilful you may be, how can you ever recall a single day of the past? Should you live for a hundred years just wasting your time, every day and month will be filled with sorrow; should you drift as the slave of your senses for a hundred years and yet live truly for only so much as a single day, you will, in that one day, not only live a hundred years of life but also save a hundred years of your future life. The life of this one day, today,*

is absolutely vital life; your body is deeply significant. Both your life and your body deserve love and respect for, it is by their agency that Truth is practised and the Buddha's power exhibited: the seed of all Buddhist activity, and of all Buddhahood is the true practice of Preceptual Truth."

From the 'Shushogi' by Great Master Dogen.

Other Festivals celebrated this Summer included those of Nagyaarajyuna Bodhisattva, Kstigarbha Bodhisattva and Bhaisajya Tathagata. For information on forthcoming Festivals, retreats and public talks please refer to the Guest Department News on page 21.

Memorial Services were held for Charles Barker and Stanislaw Kublicki-Piottuch.

**Other Ceremonies:** In September Rev. Master Daishin Morgan, M.O.B.C., was the Preceptor at the Ceremony of Lay Ordination for Dorothy Drake of Walcott-on-Sea and for John Gunn in Lowestoft. In the Lay Ordination Ceremony trainees formally become Buddhists and make the commitment of living by the Precepts to the best of their ability. We extend our best wishes to Dorothy and John.

On July 14th., Rev. Jigen Bartley, F.O.B.C., visited the Newcastle Meditation Group where she was Celebrant at the House Blessing Ceremony of Dave Hurcombe's home and the Opening of the Eyes Ceremony for the meditation group's Buddha statue.

Naming Ceremonies were held on July 30th. for Rosemary, the daughter of Tony and Lesley Head, and for Patrick, the son of Pauline and Terry Conway. Many adults and children present at the Priory's 'Family Weekend' attended these joyful naming ceremonies.

**Summer Retreats and Sesshins:** The enthusiasm and committment of the lay trainees who attended the summer retreats and sesshins this year helped to make them a success. During these weeks trainees studied: chapters from Great Master Dogen's Shobogenzo, the



life and teaching of Tozan Ryokai, the scriptures of morning service, and aspects of Bhaisajyaguru Tathagata, the Healing Buddha. There were in-depth classes and discussions on the practice of meditation and of the pitfalls that might be encountered in daily training. We hope that trainees found these weeks useful and we are offering a similar programme of retreats next summer. Any suggestions of topics that you would like covered will be gladly considered.

**Prison Project News:** Rev. Saido Kennaway, M.O.B.C., is currently a Home Office recognised visiting prison chaplain and part of the Angulimala Prison Project.

Prison libraries are often grateful for books on Buddhism. If you have just bought a new copy of Zen Is Eternal Life and have no immediate use for your original copy, or of Selling Water by the River, you might like to consider giving them to a Prison library. The Priory has contact with members of the Angulimala visiting group and can pass your spare books on to them.

**Throssel Hole Priory Bookshop:** We apologise for the delay but, because of the postal strike, the September 'Tape of the Month' cassette will be sent out together with the taped lecture due in October.

Also, if prior to September 1st. you have purchased a copy of 'The Liturgy of the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives for the Laity' by Rev. Master Jiyu-Kennett, please contact the Priory Bookshop so that we may send you additional inserts to complete your copy.

**Donations Received:** We are grateful for the wide assortment of donations received. These have included items for the library, sacristy, kitchen and infirmary departments; towels, socks, a carpet, two armchairs, a wooden tray, an electric hob, suitcases, a candle snuffer, curtains, animal 'treats' and bookshop packaging materials.

Now that the main building work is temporarily over, we have been able to concentrate on many of the maintenance jobs that have been in need of attention.

The main house roof has been renewed to replace broken slates and rotting timbers, and to provide a water-proof felt lining and some thermal insulation. Work has also been in progress in tidying up the Priory grounds; the building of garden walls and paths; painting doors and window frames; and building earth retaining walls behind the meditation and ceremony halls. We have certainly been putting to good use the nail brushes, safety goggles, rubber gloves, varnish, dusters, tape measure and elastoplast that we have also received!

And finally we wish to extend our thanks to the Newcastle Polytechnic Visual Studies Department, its Head Mr. Gilbert Ward, and Technician Mr. Nick Whitmore. Nick has travelled to the Priory on several occasions to offer his knowledge and technical skill with various monastic sculpture projects. Currently one of the monks is in the process of making a mould from which we hope to cast stupas. These will serve as grave markers in the Priory cemetery.

***Donations Requested:*** The Sewing Department has need of a sewing machine and requests that anyone who might be interested in donating one contact the Priory first. Also needed are miscellaneous sewing supplies such as tape measures, machine needles, dress making pins and black and white polyester thread.

Large plastic carrier-bags and large padded envelopes are requested for parcel packaging.

\* \* \*





## Throssel Hole Priory Bookshop Company Ltd

### STATUES

For over a thousand years Buddhists have used images to show the qualities that are found within oneself through meditation and spiritual training. They are helpful reminders that, those in the past who followed the Way wholeheartedly, discovered their full human potential, and that we can do the same today.

#### AMITABHA BUDDHA

(Japanese: Amida, Buddha of the Western Paradise).

This elegant and dignified statue is made from polished "shou shan", which is a dark reddish brown stone. It is 22cms (8 5/8") high and weighs 7lbs. Seated in meditation the hands form what has become known as the Amitabha mudra. The forefinger of each hand touches the thumb, thus forming two circles within the oval of the hands. The right hand circle represents the Divine Law of Buddha; the left circle the Human Law of Buddha; and the larger circle made by both hands expresses the unity of the two.

Please write to the Bookshop if you would like to see a picture before buying one. Thank you.

£52.00 (Inc. post and packing)

#### SPECIAL OFFER

##### AVALOKITESVARA BODHISATTVA

(Jap: Kanzeon, She Who Hears the Cries of the World)

Seated in the full lotus position with hands in the zazen posture this beautiful statue is made of polished stone which has a soft peach hue. It is 14cms (5 1/2") high with finely detailed face, flowing robes and has the lotus necklace of a Bodhisattva.

WAS £20.00

SALE PRICE £13.00 (Inc. post and packing)

Please make cheques payable to THROSSEL HOLE PRIORY BOOKSHOP CO. LTD. Thank you. A catalogue of our full stock is available on request.



INOSSE  
Carrshield  
HEXHAM  
Northumberland  
NE47 8AL